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Paul Praises SWT President for Work in Education

Washington, D.C. - On Wednesday, Dr. Robert Gratz, acting President of Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, testified before the Labor, HHS and Education Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee about the college's commitment to improving education through the National Center for School Improvement. Paul praised Gratz and the college for their hard work and innovative ideas to help improve K-12 education in Texas and all across the country. "Southwest Texas State is one of the premier teacher training schools in the country," said Paul. "Educators in Texas have proven time and time again they can train and produce a much more effective teacher than bureaucrats in the Department of Education in Washington. The National Center for School Improvement is just another example of local initiatives designed to produce the best possible education for our children. I commend Dr. Gratz and his colleagues for all of their hard work on this project." The National Center for School Improvement is a proposed partnership between SWT, George Mason University, and San Francisco State University. The center would serve three basic functions for students and teachers all over the country. It would work to increase success rates of K-12 students in the areas of reading, math, and science, establish a clearinghouse of "best teacher practices" for teaching and training techniques, and establish "rapid response action teams" to help struggling schools that have requested aid with specific problems in their classrooms. Said Gratz, "...Southwest Texas State and its partners will bring real, action-oriented student and teacher achievement solutions to troubled school districts in Texas, our partner states, and others, through the Nation Center for School Improvement." Paul believes these types of programs will be of great benefit to students and teachers but warned that the universities must be allowed to work independent of federal bureaucrats for it to be effective. "Unfortunately, Congress and the federal bureaucracy continue to strip authority away from local educators. It is time for Washington to return control of the nation's school system to the people who best know the needs of the children -- local educators and parents. The plan being proposed today by Dr. Gratz is a great example of what our educators in Texas can do when they are allowed to work out from under the microscope of Washington. This teaching center will benefit every school district in Texas with high-level teacher training that will work toward the goal of giving all of our children the best education possible."

